



US005736379A

United States Patent [19]

Davie et al.

[11] **Patent Number:** **5,736,379**[45] **Date of Patent:** ***Apr. 7, 1998**[54] **DNA SEQUENCES EXPRESSING
MAMMALIAN α_1 ANTITRYPSIN**[75] **Inventors:** **Earl W. Davie**, Bellevue; **Kotoku
Kurachi**, Seattle, both of Wash.; **Savio
L. C. Woo**; **Chandra Thirumalachary**,
both of Houston, Tex.[73] **Assignee:** **Washington Research Foundation**,
Seattle, Wash.[*] **Notice:** The term of this patent shall not extend
beyond the expiration date of Pat. No.
5,399,684.[21] **Appl. No.:** **479,545**[22] **Filed:** **Jun. 7, 1995****Related U.S. Application Data**

[63] Continuation of Ser. No. 361,689, Dec. 12, 1994, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 86,442, Jul. 2, 1993, Pat. No. 5,399,684, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 979,556, Nov. 18, 1992, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 666,450, Mar. 11, 1991, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 398,288, Aug. 22, 1989, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 246,912, Sep. 16, 1988, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 133,190, Dec. 15, 1987, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 22,543, Mar. 3, 1987, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 638,980, Feb. 7, 1984, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 380,310, May 20, 1982, abandoned.

[51] **Int. Cl.⁶** **C12N 15/00; C12N 15/12**[52] **U.S. Cl.** **435/252.3; 435/320.1;
530/23.5**[58] **Field of Search** 435/69.2, 91.1,
435/172.1, 172.3, 252.3-252.35, 325, 320.1;
536/23.5; 530/380; 935/11, 14, 29, 34,
66-75[56] **References Cited****U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**4,530,901 7/1985 Weissmann 435/172.3
5,399,684 3/1995 Davie et al. 536/23.5**OTHER PUBLICATIONS**Woo et al, 25th Annual Meeting of Am. Soc. for Cell Biol.,
J. Cell biol. 91: abstract 7061 (1981).Davie et al, Protein, Nucleic Acid and Enzyme 27: 1805
(1981).Kurache et al, Fed. Proc., 66th Ann. Meeting, Apr. 15-23,
1982, abstract 1446.

Kurachi et al, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 78: 6826 (1981).

Morii et al, J. Biochem. 83: 269 (1978).

Houghton et al, Nucleic Acids Res. 8: 1913 (1980).

Suggs et al, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 78: 6613 (1981).

Primary Examiner—James Martinell*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Christensen O'Connor Johnson
& Kindness PLLC[57] **ABSTRACT**DNA sequences to mammalian α_1 -antitrypsin are provided
which can be used for expression of mammalian
 α_1 -antitrypsin.This work was supported in part by grants HL16919 and
HL27509 from the National Institutes of Health.**5 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets**

5' GGGGGGGGGGGGAGTGATCGACA
-24
Met Pro Ser Ser Val Ser Trp Gly Ile Leu
A T G C C G T C T T C T G T C T C G T G G G C A T C C T C
+1 10 20 30

-10
Leu Leu Ala Gly Leu Cys Cys Leu Val Pro
C T G C T G G C A G G C C T G T G C T G C C T C C C T
40 50 60

-1 1
Val Ser Leu Ala Glu Asp Pro Gln Gly Asp
G T C T C C C T G G C T G A G G A T C C C C A G G A G A T
70 80 90

10
Ala Ala Gln Lys Thr Asp Thr Ser His His
G C T G C C C A G A G A C A G A T A C A T C C C A C C A T
100 110 120

FIGURE 1A

Asp	Gln	Asp	His	Pro	Thr	Phe	Asn	Lys	Ile													
G	A	T	C	A	G	A	T	C	A	A	G	A	T	C								
130																						
140																						
150																						
Thr	Pro	Asn	Leu	Ala	Glu	Phe	Ala	Phe	Ser													
A	C	C	C	A	A	C	T	T	G	A	G	T	T	C	A	G	C					
160																						
170																						
180																						
Leu	Tyr	Arg	Gln	Leu	Ala	His	Gln	Ser	Asn													
C	T	A	T	A	C	C	G	C	A	G	C	T	G	G	C	A	C					
190																						
200																						
210																						
Ser	Thr	Asn	Ile	Phe	Phe	Ser	Pro	Val	Ser													
A	G	C	A	C	A	T	A	T	C	T	C	T	C	C	C	A	G	T	G	A	G	C
220																						
230																						
240																						

FIGURE 1B

[illegible]

[illegible]

FIGURE 1D

140
Leu Tyr His Ser Glu Ala Phe Thr Val Asn
T T G T A C C A C T C A G A A G C C T T C A C T G T C A A C 510
490 500

150
Phe Gly Asp Thr Glu Glu Ala Lys Lys Gln
T T C G G G A C A C C G A A G A G C C A A G A A C A G 540
520 530

160
Ile Asn Asp Tyr Val Glu Lys Gly Thr Gln
A T C A A C G A T T A C G T G G A G A A G G T A C T C A A 570
550 560

170
Gly Lys Ile Val Asp Leu Val Lys Glu Leu
G G G A A A T T G T G G A T T T G G T C A A G A G C T T 600
580 590

FIGURE 1E

[illegible]

FIGURE 1F

[illegible]

FIGURE 1G

260	Glu	Gly	Lys	Leu	Gln	His	Leu	Glu	Asn	Glu
	G A G G G A A A C T A C A G C A C C T G G A A A T G A A									
	850						860			870
270	Leu	Thr	His	Asp	Ile	Ile	Thr	Lys	Phe	Leu
	C T C A C C A C G A T A T C A T C A C C A A G T T C C T G									
	880						890			900
280	Glu	Asn	Glu	Asp	Arg	Arg	Ser	Ala	Ser	Leu
	G A A A A T G A A G A C A G A A G G T C T G C C A G C T T A									
	910						920			930
290	His	Leu	Pro	Lys	Leu	Ser	Ile	Thr	Gly	Thr
	C A T T T A C C C A A A C T G T C C A T T A C T G G A A C C									
	940						950			960

FIGURE 1H

Tyr	Asp	Leu	Lys	Ser	Val	Leu	Gly	Gln	Leu
T A T G A T C T G A A G A G C G T C C T A G G T C A A C T G									
			970			980			990
Gly	Ile	Thr	Lys	Val	Phe	Ser	Asn	Gly	Ala
G G C A T C A C T A A G G T C T T C A G C A A T G G G C C T									
			1000			1010			1020
Asp	Leu	Ser	Gly	Val	Thr	Glu	Glu	Ala	Pro
G A C C T C T C C G G G T C A C A G A G G A G C A C C C									
			1030			1040			1050
Leu	Lys	Leu	Ser	Lys	Ala	Val	His	Lys	Ala
C T G A A G C T C T C C A A G G C C G T G C A T A A G G C C T									
			1060			1070			1080

FIGURE 1I

340
Val Leu Thr Ile Asp Glu Lys Gly Thr Glu
G T G C T G A C C A T C G A C G A G A A G G A C T G A A
1090 1100 1110

350
Ala Ala Gly Ala Met Phe Leu Glu Ala Ile
G C T G C T G G G C C A T G T T T T A G A G C C A T A
1120 1130 1140

360
Pro Met Ser Ile Arg Pro Glu Val Lys Phe
C C C A T G T C T A T C C G C C C G A G T C A A G T T C
1150 1160 1170

370
Asn Lys Pro Phe Val Phe Leu Met Ile Glu
A A C A A C C C T T T G T C T T C T T A A T G A T T G A A
1180 1190 1200

FIGURE 1J

[illegible]

DNA SEQUENCES EXPRESSING MAMMALIAN α_1 ANTITRYPSIN

This application is a continuation application based on prior copending application Ser. No. 08/361,689, filed on Dec. 12, 1994, now abandoned, which is a continuation of the prior application Ser. No. 08/086,442, filed Jul. 2, 1993 (U.S. Pat. No. 5,399,684), which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 07/979,556, filed Nov. 18, 1992, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 07/666,450 filed on Mar. 11, 1991, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 07/398,288 filed on Aug. 22, 1989, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 07/246,912 filed on Sep. 16, 1988, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 07/133,190 filed on Dec. 15, 1987, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 07/022,543 filed on Mar. 3, 1987, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 06/638,980 filed on Feb. 7, 1984, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application Ser. No. 06/380,310 filed on May 20, 1982, now abandoned, the benefit of the filing dates of which are hereby claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 120.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

α_1 -Antitrypsin is an important protease inhibitor present in mammalian blood. Its major physiological function appears to be the inhibition of neutrophil elastase, a potent protease that hydrolyzes structural proteins. It also inhibits many other serine proteases.

A low level of α_1 -antitrypsin in the blood is often associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary emphysema and infantile liver cirrhosis. At present, more than 30 different genetic variants have been identified. Several of these are associated with low concentrations of the inhibitor in the blood.

The normal plasma level of α_1 -antitrypsin is about 2 mg/ml. Under most inflammatory conditions, an acute-phase response is initiated and the concentration of α_1 -antitrypsin is substantially increased. In order to study α_1 -antitrypsin deficiency at the molecular level and examine the mechanism of the acute phase response, it would be desirable to have pure α_1 -antitrypsin polypeptide. The α_1 -antitrypsin polypeptide could be used for the formation of antibodies to the numerous determinant sites to provide for detection of variants in the blood, as a ligand in assays for α_1 -antitrypsin, and for introduction into a host having α_1 -antitrypsin deficiency.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Shochat, et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* (1978), 253:5630-5634; Morii, et al., *J. Biochem.* (1978), 83:269-277; Carrell, et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.* (1979), 91:1032-1037; Nega, et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* (1980), 255:4057-4061; and Crawford, *Arch. Biochem. Biophys.* (1973), 156:215-222; have reported various characteristics of α_1 -antitrypsin. Kurachi, et al., *PNAS* (1981), 78:6826-6830, and Chandra, et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.* (1981), 103:751-758, describe cloning and sequencing of cDNA coding for α_1 -antitrypsin.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

DNA sequences, including cDNA and rDNA capable of expressing mammalian α_1 -antitrypsin are provided, as well as compositions and methods for producing the polypeptide

chain of α_1 -antitrypsin. α_1 -Antitrypsin polypeptide made by recombinant DNA is provided.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1A-1K set forth the human α_1 -antitrypsin cDNA discussed in the specification.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIFIC EMBODIMENTS

DNA sequences capable of expression of polypeptides having mammalian α_1 -antitrypsin biological activity are provided. The sequences can be used for introduction into a host cell to enhance the production of products having α_1 -antitrypsin activity. The DNA sequences include DNA sequences having exons and introns free of their normal flanking regions, messenger RNA which has been matured and is capped and includes a polyA 3' chain, cDNA obtained by transcribing mRNA and the combination of the DNA with DNA sequences, which provide regulatory signals for expression, replication, amplification, and regulated response to a variety of conditions and reagents.

The nucleic acid sequences and their expression products are polypeptides having α_1 -antitrypsin activity, in that the compounds inhibit elastase by forming an equimolar complex of the enzyme and the inhibitor with an association rate constant of greater than about 10^6 per mole-sec. The compounds are derived from mammals, particularly primates, such as baboon and human. The chromosomal DNA fragment encoding α_1 -antitrypsin is less than about 10 kb, usually less than about 9 kb. The approximate sizes of the exon regions I, II, III, and IV are, respectively, about 0.71, 0.33, 0.13, and 0.2 kb's in length. The sizes of the introns A, B, and C are, respectively, about 1.45, 1.15, and 0.8 kb's, and the three introns are generally located within the 5' half of the DNA. The cDNA encoding α_1 -antitrypsin is about 1.182 kb's in length. The mature mRNA encoding human α_1 -antitrypsin is about 1.4 kb's in length.

The DNA sequences may be used in a variety of ways. Where chromosomal DNA is employed for transformation of host cells which are capable of recognizing the intron borders and providing for the mature mRNA, the DNA may be calcium precipitated in accordance with conventional ways and used for transformation of primate cells. For the most part, cells which can grow in vitro are cancerous and various cancerous lines may be employed for transformation. Particularly, cells of hepatic origin; e.g., hepatomas, may be employed. One may then select for transformed cells overproducing α_1 -antitrypsin.

Rather than using bare DNA, cDNA obtained by reverse transcription of mature mRNA may be inserted into a wide variety of vectors for introduction into a host for expression of α_1 -antitrypsin. The particular vector will depend upon the host and other considerations affecting the efficiency of production of the α_1 -antitrypsin. Hosts which may be employed for the production of α_1 -antitrypsin include unicellular microorganisms, such as the prokaryotes, bacteria, and eukaryotes, such as fungi, e.g., yeast, algae, protozoa, and the like. Vectors are available for cloning, expression, for amplification of genes, as well as providing for external controls, such as temperature, heavy metal ions, or the like.

Methods of introducing DNA into an organism and providing for amplification of genes encoded into such DNA may be found in PCT International Application Nos. US 81/00239 and US 81/00240. The choice of vector, regulatory signals, or other control systems will be primarily a matter relating to convenience, availability, fermentation

equipment, economics, and intended use of the product. The aforementioned PCT patents provided for a generalized description of hybrid DNA technology, which technology is incorporated herein by reference.

The primate gene for α_1 -antitrypsin can be obtained by instituting hepatic local inflammation in a primate, then sacrificing the primate and isolating the liver. Polysomes are then obtained as described in the literature, and the polysomes synthesizing nascent α_1 -antitrypsin enriched by immunoprecipitation. After analysis by mRNA-dependent cell-free translation employing reticulocyte, the desired cDNA would be obtained from the mRNA-enriched preparation. The cDNA is then restriction mapped and superfluous sequences removed or the cDNA is tailed, for example, a polydG-polydC tail, and then inserted into the cohesive ends of a vector. Based on the sequences, the cDNA may be modified in a variety of ways. Superfluous nucleotides, not involved in coding for α_1 -antitrypsin, may be removed by primer repair. See, for example, Goeddel, et al., Nucl. Acids Res. (1980), 8:4057-4074; Razin, et al., PNAS USA (1978), 75:4268-4270; and Wallace, et al., Science (1980), 209:1396-1400.

For primer repair, a synthetic single-stranded DNA oligomer is prepared which is complimentary to the 3'-terminus of the coding ("sense") strand of the gene encoding the α_1 -antitrypsin. The cDNA is denatured and the DNA oligomer hybridized to the coding strand. The hybrid is then treated with T4 DNA polymerase or *E. coli* DNA polymerase large ("Klenow") fragment, so that a double strand is obtained where the coding strand has the ATG codon as the initial 3 nucleotides.

Alternatively, instead of including the leader sequence, one may use in vitro mutagenesis and prepare a synthetic DNA oligomer which replaces the Ala codon at -1 with the Met codon ATG. As the first step in this process, one would prepare a synthetic DNA oligomer, including at least the following sequence: GACTAGCTC, normally having not more than about six more nucleotides at the 5' end and at least about three nucleotides at the 3' end of the oligomer complimentary to the nucleotide of the coding strand of the α_1 -antitrypsin gene. After hybridizing the coding strand with the oligomer, the mismatched hybrid will then be treated with the same polymerase indicated above, so that the resulting double-stranded DNA would have a blunt-end terminus beginning with the nucleotides of the oligomer. In this way, the resulting dsDNA could be inserted into an expression vector, downstream from an appropriate promoter, and ribosomal start site, so that expression would be initiated at the synthetically created Met codon. As appropriate, linkers may be used to provide for cohesive ends or, alternatively, the DNA sequence may be blunt end ligated into the expression vector.

An alternative method would be to cleave the DNA fragment containing the sequence encoding for α_1 -antitrypsin intact and then, by employing an exonuclease, such as Bal 31, and by chewing back the terminal residues, one obtains a heterogeneous mixture of fragments. By timing the digestion, based on the number of nucleotides which must be removed, one can obtain fragments which will have the ATG codon in appropriate juxtaposition with a ribosomal start site, when such fragments are inserted into an expression vector. Initially, one may introduce the fragments into a cloning vector and, by employing appropriate probes, select for the clone having the desired fragments.

A preferred way is to follow the procedure of Heitzman et al., Nature (1981) 293:717-722, which disclosure is incor-

porated herein by reference. By restricting with BamHI, an intact fragment encoding for α_1 -antitrypsin is obtained except for the first two codons encoding Met and Glu. By ligating a linker having the nucleotides encoding the amino acids to the α_1 -antitrypsin fragment, the entire α_1 -antitrypsin sequence may be inserted into an expression vector for expression.

In expressing the α_1 -antitrypsin, one may retain the leader sequence or remove the leader sequence, depending upon the host. Where a higher order host is employed and the leader peptide is retained, the host secretes the α_1 -antitrypsin with removal of the leader peptide.

Various vectors may be employed, such as plasmids, cosmids, or viruses. The expression vectors may conveniently be shuttle vectors, which allow for amplification in a prokaryote with expression in a eukaryote. Therefore, one would require replicons for both eukaryotes and prokaryotes in the vector. Secondly, one can provide for a wide variety of markers, such as cytotoxic resistance, viral immunity, prototrophy in an auxotrophic host, and the like. Conveniently, antibiotic resistance can be employed as a useful marker. Other features of the vector may include homologous sequences with the host gene to provide for integration of the α_1 -antitrypsin gene into the chromosome of the host. If desired, minichromosomes may be employed as described by Clarke and Carbon, PNAS USA (1980), 77:2173-2177; and Clarke and Carbon, Nature (1980), 287(5782):504-509.

The human α_1 -antitrypsin cDNA is set forth in the FIGS. 1A-1K.

The gene for the human α_1 -antitrypsin is of about 5 kd. The nucleotide coding for the α_1 -antitrypsin, including the f-Met codon and leader sequence, is 1254 nucleotides, which includes 72 nucleotides involved with the leader sequence, as compared with about 1400 nucleotides for the mature messenger RNA. The mature human α_1 -antitrypsin has 394 amino acids, as set forth in the prior sequence.

In order to describe the manner in which the DNA sequence for human α_1 -antitrypsin and baboon α_1 -antitrypsin were developed, the following examples are offered by way of illustration and not by way of limitation.

EXPERIMENTAL

Overlapping Genomic α_1 -Antitrypsin Clones

A total of 16 independent phage isolates were obtained when 2×10^6 plaques from the human genomic DNA library (Lawn, et al., Cell (1978), 15:1156-1174) were screened using the baboon α_1 -antitrypsin cDNA clone (Chandra, et al., Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm. (1981), 103:751-758) as a hybridization probe. Subsequent analysis of the 16 isolates indicated that they originated from four independent clones. The four clones, labeled aAT135, aAT35, aAT80 and aAT101, were analyzed by restriction mapping and Southern hybridization using as probes an Mbo II fragment of pBa α 1 DNA, which contains the 3' terminal region of the baboon cDNA (Chandra, et al., *ibid.*) and an Hha I fragment of pBa α 2 DNA which is a baboon cDNA clone lacking only about 100 nucleotides at the 5' end of the mRNA (Kurachi, et al., PNAS USA (1981), 78:6826-6830). These results have established the orientation of the human α_1 -antitrypsin gene and have indicated that the entire gene may reside within a 9.6 kb Eco RI DNA fragment in the human genome.

Mosaic Structure of the Human α_1 -Antitrypsin Gene

The overall structure of the human α_1 -antitrypsin gene was established by electron microscopic examination of hybrid molecules formed between the cloned chromosomal

5

DNA and baboon α_1 -antitrypsin mRNA. The mature mRNA consists of approximately 1400 nucleotides. DNA was denatured thermally and hybrids were formed subsequently under conditions that favored RNA/DNA hybridization but not DNA/DNA reassociation. From the electron micrographs and line drawings, it was evident that there are three intervening DNA loops (introns) of various sizes within the human α_1 -antitrypsin gene. The poly(A) tract in the mRNA was clearly visible in the hybrid molecule, thereby confirming the orientation of the gene. When aAT135 DNA was cleaved with Eco RI prior to hybrid formation with the baboon mRNA, the smallest intervening DNA loop was very close to one end of the DNA molecule. Numonic measurements of the hybrid molecules have indicated that the approximate sizes of exon regions I, II, III, and IV are 0.71, 0.33, 0.13 and 0.27 kb's in length, respectively. The sizes of introns A, B, and C are 1.45, 1.15, and 0.8 kb's, respectively, and all three introns appear to be located within the 3' half of the mRNA.

In order to characterize the human chromosomal α_1 -antitrypsin gene in greater detail, the 9.6 kb Eco RI DNA fragment was subcloned into the Eco RI site of pBR322. The resulting clone, pAT9.6, was analyzed by restriction mapping and Southern hybridization. Four exon segments were identified within the 9.6 kb Eco RI DNA fragment using a combination of enzymes that do not cut the baboon α_1 -antitrypsin cDNA insert in pBac1a2 (Kurachi, et al. (1981), supra) These results confirmed the existence of three introns in the human α_1 -antitrypsin gene. The presence of only three introns in the peptide-coding region of the human chromosomal α_1 -antitrypsin gene was confirmed by DNA sequence analysis.

The 5' and 3' terminal sequences of the human α_1 -antitrypsin gene

Southern hybridization analysis between different portions of the baboon cDNA clone and human genomic fragments generated by digestion of pAT9.6 revealed DNA fragments which hybridize uniquely with either the 5' or the 3' end of the cDNA probe. By DNA sequencing, fragments of the human genomic DNA that code for amino acids at both the amino and carboxyl-terminal regions of human α_1 -antitrypsin were identified. The distance between these two regions is approximately 5 kb, which is in good agreement with our estimates of the size of the gene, based on the electron micrographs. The amino acid sequence at the amino-terminal region agrees for 30 of the 33 residues that have been published for human α_1 -antitrypsin (Morii et al., J. Biochem. (1978) 83:269-277). Amino acids that are different include Lys₁₀, His₂₀ and Ile₂₆, which were reported as Glu, Ser and Leu, respectively. The DNA sequence corresponding to the amino-terminal region of the protein was confirmed by sequencing both strands of the genomic DNA. Furthermore, the residues in question are identical to those determined for baboon α_1 -antitrypsin. The amino acid sequence containing 32 residues at the carboxyl end of the mature protein was also deduced from the genomic DNA sequence. This amino acid sequence is in complete agreement with that previously published for α_1 -antitrypsin

6

(Carrell et al., Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm. (1979) 91:1032-1037). Also, the genomic DNA sequence was identical with the corresponding nucleotide sequence of a human α_1 -antitrypsin cDNA clone.

The first ATG start codon at the 5' end of the α_1 -antitrypsin gene is located 24 amino acids upstream from the amino-terminal Glu residue in the mature protein. This region appears to code for a typical signal peptide, which is removed from the mature protein during intracellular processing prior to extracellular transport. The features of this signal peptide are similar to those seen for other signal peptides including an amino terminal methionine residue, a hydrophobic core flanked by regions of more polar residues, a small uncharged amino acid at the putative cleavage site, proline at position -5 and a length of ~ 15-30 amino acid residues. Furthermore, there appears to be a "TATA box" sequence located at position -25 to -31 of the gene, which resembles the consensus sequence,



proposed by Cordon et al. The transcription start point in eukaryotes also has a consensus sequence, PyCAPyPyPy-PyPy (A=position+1; Py represents pyrimidine).

Based on the description in Kurachi et al. (1981), supra, the baboon α_1 -antitrypsin gene can also be used for producing baboon α_1 -antitrypsin as described above in conjunction with the disclosure of Kurachi.

In accordance with the subject invention, α_1 -antitrypsin can be produced by hybrid DNA techniques. By virtue of the flexibility of hybrid DNA technology, large amounts of α_1 -antitrypsin free of sugar substituents can be obtained. Furthermore, by employing appropriate hosts, the presence of the leader peptide allows for secretion of the product into the nutrient medium for ease of isolation.

Although the foregoing invention has been described in some detail by way of illustration and example for purposes of clarity of understanding, it will be obvious that certain changes and modifications may be practiced within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An isolated nucleic acid which hybridizes to the human α_1 -antitrypsin cDNA shown in the FIGS. 1A-1K and which encodes a polypeptide exhibiting α_1 -antitrypsin activity.

2. An isolated nucleic acid according to claim 1, which comprises a 3' terminal coding sequence identical to the sequence AAT-CCC-ACC-CAA-AAA shown in FIGS. 1A-1K.

3. A vector comprising an isolated nucleic acid according to claim 1.

4. A host cell transformed with a vector according to claim 3.

5. A host cell transformed with an isolated nucleic acid according to claim 1.

* * * * *